The Stars and Stripes

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FRIDAY, MARCH 21, 1919.

IN BEING

The three-day caucus which closed Monday in Paris marks the inception, so far as the A.E.F. is concerned, of the first authentic, all-embracing association of land and sea veterans that has come out of America's participation in the war.

A score of organizations, in France and in America, have already made localized, misdirected or otherwise unfortunate attempts at a similar coalition of America's fighting men—a term which honorably includes those American soldiers who did not get to France, but who, as the great reserve, were clearly before the minds of the German armistice delegates.

These other attempts have failed, in every instance, either because they did not have their roots in, or gain their initial impulse from, the whole American Army.

The impetus that has already established the new association on the road to actual organization has come directly from the Army, and the whole Army. More than that, it has come spontaneously. It is something for which no one person, or group of persons, can in all honesty claim individual credit.

There had to be a veterans' association as surely as there had to be victory. That it actually started at a representative meeting of members of the A.E.F. in Paris on March 16, 1919, is simply to single out the peg on which history will hang it. It might have been done somewhere else at some other time. But the happy fact is that it has been done, that it has started, and that every man in the A.E.F. is a member of it unless—which privilege he freely owns—he chooses not to be.

STILL BACKING US

The loyalty to the Yank of his folks back home didn't blow up with a bop like a busted tire the minute the armistice was signed. From all signs and tokens, the backing-up process is still going on with might and main.

Here is an extract from a letter, written from a semi-rural community that might be anywhere in the States, but just happens to be New England, to prove it.

We had a great time here getting into the Soldiers' and Sailors' Benefit carnival. They made about $6,000 last Fourth of July and wanted to make it $10,000 before the division came home. The ticket plan was really a lotter scheme, of which nobody approved, but somehow, those tickets went.

I had to push them, and when I said I heartily disapproved of it, and I wondered my revered father didn't turn over in his grave, and that he always made his little boys give back their marbles, etc., a good, staunch Congregationalist wife of a deacon who is principal of the Blank Street School piped up, "Well, times have changed$ It's for the boys! I'll take six!" And at $1 per, they began to go.

After that, we made the D.A.R. get a move on, secured the hall, advertised the party wildly, staged a food sale along with the entertainment, and the whole thing was a howling success. We went well over the $4,000 we needed. Now, if some of the boys need to go to the Adirondacks to rid their blessed lungs of phosgene, of if they need a little help quietly applied, we shall have had a hand in it, thank God!

You see? They bet on us while the war was on, and now that it's over they're willing to bet for us, deacons, deacons' wives, and all. Pretty good folks, eh? Pretty fine folks to go back to!

POOR COBLENZ

In Fismes, the Vesle city where many young Americans fought and died through the hot weeks of last August, the havoc wrought by the guns was so complete that there are only heaps of crumbled stone left to welcome those hardy families that are creeping back to forge amid the ruins a new existence.

The people of Juvigny must needs set up housekeeping in our old dugouts, for there were no roofs or walls left when the battle swept on toward the frontier.

Coblenz is so different—Coblenz, with its fine houses, its smart cafes, its crowded opera, its fair boulevards, untouched by war. Only in matters of the spirit is Coblenz poorer.

But it is that spiritual thing which will still be the rich possession of the ruined French towns long after time and toil and the friendship of the world have effaced all the marks of the purely physical loss they have suffered.

It is that spiritual thing which would decide your answer to the question:

"Which would you rather be today—a citizen of Coblenz or a citizen of Fismes?"

WHERE THEY FELL

In little roadside cemeteries, each sodless, issue grave marked by its wooden cross, our dead lie sleeping in the soil of France.

Lieut. Quentin Roosevelt's father and mother asked the War Department that his body be left forever as a part of that soil. It is probably the feeling throughout America, and it is certainly the feeling throughout the A.E.F., that the American soldiers who fell in this war should always lie buried along the roads they died defending.

But after all, it is not for us or even America to decide. If there is any mother in some lonely home in the States who wants the body of her boy borne back across the seas, who would care to say no? Or who would have the right?

TORIES

Complacency is the name of the vice which, in Army mess kitchens, leaves in the crevices of G.I. stew pans the microscopic refuse of immemorial meals bygone; which recks not of open latrines, or unchlorinated water, or empty canteens the night before the barrage. Happily, the Army has people whose business it is to kill this sort of complacency or, better still, to prevent it. But there is a complacency fashioned on a far grander scale than this. It is the sort of complacency which is now feebly lifting its voice for a return to the world-as-it-used-to-be.

It wasn't such a bad old world. There were good times, and dances, and plenty of sugar, and jitneys, and 35-cent table d'hôtes, and not a single woman in overalls. Automobiles killed occasionally, and sometimes there was a murder, and daredevils climbed ten-story buildings by clinging to nothing to boost the sale of Sevenply Sox.

The beauty of it is, for those of us who long for these things as we long for anything not connected with sleeping 80 in a room and washing at a community pump, that the new world will contain all these delights just as surely as the old did. But it was the old world, the world which the complacent Tories of our day want back, that, among its other frivolities, made this war possible.

MARCH 21

A year ago today the German Army launched on the British front the overwhelming drive which wracked the Allied lines. A year ago today was struck the first of that succession of sledge-hammer blows which exhausted to ruination the once formidable strengt of te Central Empires, a blow made on the gambler's chance that Germany could win the war before the Americans arrived in large enough numbers to count.

So great, so unprecedentedly great, is the change which has come over the world in the course of that year that it is difficult for us to realize now how oppressive was the black anxiety of the three months which followed. It is difficult to recall the feeling that was in all our hearts when Sir Douglas Haig's challenging battlecry rang out across a startled world. It is difficult to believe that a year ago the troops of the British Empire were fighting with their backs against the wall. As for ourselves—well, we, like John Paul Jones, had not yet begun to fight.

It is probable that nowhere in the Allied world were there well-informed men who believed that the first anniversary of the St. Quentin disaster would see the envoys of the Allied Governments assembled in Paris for the finishing touches on a peace treaty of their own free composition. It is certainly no secret that in American military circles the people who should know felt that we would be doing well if we could evade destruction in 1918, hold the Germans to a draw in 1919, and come into our own in 1920.

Now, in the leisure for reflection afforded by the somewhat tedious process of sitting around France waiting for a boat, it is worth while remembering that, according to the best prophets, the chances a year ago were decidedly against our ever going home at all. And if some of us persist in feeling cheerful even through all this creeping business of demobilization, perhaps it is because we realize we have been far, far luckier than we had dared to hope.

When the days seem very long and when the powers that be seem to have forgotten that your outfit ever existed, remember what might have been. Remember what came painfully near to being. Remember that all the evidence last spring pointed to the prospect that March 21, 1919, would see the American Expeditionary Forces just entering on an offensive, compared with which, in lives lost, bodies mutilated and fortunes squandered, the Meuse-Argonne battle would have been made to seem like a playful skirmish.

WHAT AMERICA ASKS

Said President Wilson in his home-coming speech in Boston:

The proudest thing I have to report is that this great country is trusted throughout the world. . . . This confidence imposes a burden upon us—if you choose to call it a burden. It is one of those burdens any nation ought to be proud to carry.

Yes, it is a proud burden, certainly. In all the pregnant years of the last two and a half centuries in which the United States has been a pioneer in the march of civilization there can have been no moments when an American could feel more justly proud of his nation and his nationality than now. In all the complexities of today, in all the debate, all the contriving, all the fogging of issues, one fact stands out transcendantly:

Whatever America asks, whatever she demands, however she casts her inuence, there is never the suggestion that her motive is other than unselfish and sincere. And her influence is the more potent in consequence.

One hundred thousand lives, a two years' pause in her industrial progress, two years of discomfort, sometimes suffering, for several millions of her sons and daughters is the price America has paid. In recompense she asks merely a better world—not better for America, especially, but for all the peoples of the world.

THE PENALTY

The shindig in London ten days ago, which has passed into history as the Battle of Bow Street, has more than one embarrassment for the A.E.F.

We are obliged, for example, to sit politely silent and even unsmiling under the provocation of the following paragraph from a London newspaper's account of the affair:

"Shooting the dice" is the name of the gambling game which was the cause of yesterday's trouble. It is a game which developed into a mania with United States troops in France. Frequently large groups of players had to be separated when dicing under shell fire to prevent heavy casualties.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Pvt. John De Pastino is a member of a detachment of Pioneer Infantry. He had reason to know the manual of arms better than English grammar, because the call to the Army came before he had finished his schooling. Recently he applied for a leave to visit his birthplace in Italy, concluding his application this:

If this request is granted me, I promise to the extent and dignity of my honor to comport myself as would be expected of me as an American soldier.

—"as would be expected of me as an American soldier."

Be he a peanut vendor or capitalist, of Italian descent or Chinese, a general or a private, a soldier can't promise much more than that. And there couldn't be a better Golden Rule for this Army of ours.

The Army's Poets

A QUERY

Do you love me to distraction,
Mildred, mine? For my mental satisfaction (oo! that's fine) will you hat
me out a letter, telling me you love me better than you ever loved another, Baby Mine?
Are your brown eyes brown
as ever, Honey Mine? Is
your coiffure quite as clever? (My, what shine!) Am I
mentioned in
your chatter?
Does your
heart go pit-
ter patter,
when the
postman
blows the
whistle
Wifey Mine?
Do you weep
sad weeps a-
bout me, Gir-
ly Mine? Do
you get the
'creeps' with-
out me, any-
time? Do you
hanker to ca-
ress me? Does

my ab-
sence here
distress thee?
Art thou wearing
out my bath-
robe, Lady
Mine?

ALLAN R. THOMPSON, Sgt.

THE MASCOT SPEAKS

They say I can't go back with him,
They say we dogs are banned.
They told him that. They didn't think
That I could understand.

I've had him pretty near a year,
Since I was just a pup.
I used to be a sort of bum,
And then—he picked me up.

We've slept together in the rain,
And snow, too, quite a lot.
Cold nights we kept each other warm,
Some days we ate—some not.

Once he went to the hospital,
I followed. They said, "No."
He swore a lot and told the doc
Unless I stayed, he'd go.

He's going to go home pretty soon
And leave me here—oh well—
I wonder if dogs have a heav'n?
I know we've got a hell.

RAGS.

A DAY IN THE R.T.O.'S OFFICE

THE BUCK (Looking for His Outfit):
"Office of the R.T.O.?
Say! Where the dickens do I go?
Here's my order, read it, Bo:
'Without delay to Port Bordeaux.'
I've rid the trains for jours and jours,
Finally landed up in Tours,
And a cocky M.P. there
Sent me down to St. Nazaire."

THE OFFICER (On Leave to the Riviera)
"Office of the R.T.O.?
Really, I should like to know,
If the trains from Nice to Pau
Ever stop, account of snow;
Can a fellow buy a drink,
On the diner, do you think?
Does the train from Pau to Mars
Carry observation cars?"

THE Y.M.C.A. ENTERTAINER (First Time in France):
"Office of the R.T.O.?
Look here kid, now don't be slow;
The Colonel with me is me beau,
And this here order's good as dough;
Gimme a seat in the parlor car,
For I'm a genuwyne Follies star,
And I belong to the Broadway set,
A Ziegfeld beauty, I am, you bet!"

THE OFFICER WHO HAS LOST HIS BAGGAGE (Carelessness of Orderlies):
"Office of the R.T.O.?
Sir! My name is Captain Lowe
Did my baggage really go
On the train at Saint Malo?
Do you think 'twas ever sent
On its journey, homeward bent,
Or is roaming, fancy free?
Will it e'er come back to me?"

THE RED CROSS WORKER (On Leave):
"Office of the R.T.O.?
Do the roses really blow
Through the fields of drifted snow
Round the town of Challes-les-Eaux?
Can I on France's glory gaze
In a trip of fourteen days?
Can I circle half the earth?
Do I have a lower berth?

L'ENVOI (The Poor R.T.O.):
Torn with passion, sick with doubt,
Fears within, and tears without,
Nothing hoping, nothing gained,
Nerves all shattered, scatter-brained;
Days with foolish questions ridden,
Nights with sleep and rest forbidden,
He, like hero, bold and brave,
Hopes for rest beyond the grave.

MARSHALL B. KING, Engr. Clerk.

MAD'MOISELLE

Oh, you've helped me while away,
And you've helped me smile away,
Many long and dreary hours, mad'moiselle.
I have laughed at your quaint ways,
You have brightened all the days,
But may heart is not for you, mad'moiselle.

That, I gave a sweetheart true,
'Neath the Red, the White, and Blue,
Long before I saw your land, mad'moiselle.
Not she doesn't know your lingo—
Not so dainty, but by jingo,
I have gone through hell for her, mad'moiselle.

I've admired your pluck and cheer,
That has ne'er had time for tear,
When your little heart was breaking, mad'moiselle.
All your favors I'll remember,
But, God willing, next September,
I shall wed my Yankee sweetheart, mad'moiselle.

It was mem'ry of her hand
Led me safe through No Man's Land,
When all hell was bursting 'round me, mad'moiselle.
And all through the coming years,
In our joys, our sorrows' tears,
We shall not forget your kindness, mad'moiselle.

R. A. HEDGES,
Pvt., Co. E, 13th Marines.

O.D.

I've fired my last gun
At the hurryin' Hun,
And I'm quittin' the Army, you see.
When a civvy again
But two words will remain
Of my soldier shop-talk. That's O.D.

Olive drab the terms means,
But to me it sure seems
That those letters are used mighty free.
At work or at play
In the night or by day
We've bumped into little O.D.

At taps in the camp
When we turned down the lamp
Our blankets, O.D., numbered three.
And when reveille blew
We just fairly flew
Into shirt, blouse and breeches, O.D.

Officer of the Day,
If he's coming your way
When a sentry you happen to be,
You spread your alarm
To your comrades in arms
With "Heads up, boys, here comes the O.D."

In France here, so fair
As a tonic for hair,
Eau de vie giveth great ecstacy,
And soldiers have laughed,
As they've merrily quaffed
Many glasses of French eau de vie.

Eau de Cologne is great
But don't it beat fate
Why that O.D. sound here too should be,
And something much worse
That will cause you to curse,
Is your package that's marked C.O.D.

When I'm free once again
And I pull up the rein
In the land where the bunchgrass is free,
When the roundup's at hand,
All the calves that I brand
Will be seared with a big, bright O.D.

J. J. ANNIM, Casual, Wild West Div.

HOME AGAIN

LABOR BATTALIONS

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:—

Widespread publicity has been given in the newspapers published in France and the United States as to the method of handling soldiers AWOL under the provisions of G.O. 10, c.s., G.H.Q. Through the newspaper publicity thus accorded these AWOL's a wrong impression has become prevalent, even in the military establishments of the A.E.F., at the expense of the men of the regularly established labor battalions.

If those of the military service thus get the wrong impression, the civilian population at home, which is entirely ignorant of military matters, certainly is excusable for even a more exaggerated viewpoint.

The above-mentioned order provides that members of the A.E.F. found guilty by court-martial of being AWOL shall be assigned to special labor battalions created for the purpose. They are, therefore, virtually prisoners, but instead of being given various lengths of guardhouse sentences to be worked out in local disciplinary barracks, they are concentrated in these special battalions to be used for any purpose for which laborers are needed. The outstanding feature of the order is that they are to be among the last troops to be returned home.

The regular labor battalions in the S.O.S., formed under the stress of necessity during active operations, were drawn from many units, a few at a time, as necessity demanded the increase in labor. These men are soldiers with the same standing in the A.E.F. as any other soldiers performing the duty to which they have been assigned. As a matter of fair play, they therefore, feel that they have a just complaint in the daily press' failure to draw the distinction between the two kinds of labor battalions.

When people at home learn that a man was in a labor organization in France they are more than likely to question his veracity if he claims that he was not serving out a sentence of some kind. Letters have already been received in which the question has been asked, "What have you done to be put in a labor company?"

Within the last few days the AWOL labor battalions have had their names changed to development battalions, which draws a line of distinction between the two classes of organizations. Too bad the folks at home do not know of it.

W.C.G.

WELL, BECAUSE

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:—

In your last issue there is a letter from a second lieutenant, signed "One of 'Em," and I want to take this opportunity of pushing his point a little further.

I am a second lieutenant and have recently come back from the front, and I know a few things about it, so would like to ask a few questions of those who have been there and seen. Did anybody ever see a colonel lead a second lieutenant "over the top"? And in what battle was it that the generals drove the tanks? And when did the majors fly combat ships over the lines to engage in battle with the Hun? Have you ever read in the casualty list where it says, "Second lieutenants, unless otherwise stated?" The reason for that is plain. If the paper put the full title in front of every "shave's" name there would be no room left for the news.

So, please tell me, why do they kid the second lieutenant?

ANOTHER OF 'EM.

A.N.C.

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:—

It seems that far too little has been said or written here or in America about the part played by the Army Nurse Corps in the A.E.F.

To those of us who have observed their work in the base and evacuation centers, and in the advance dressing stations, it appears that no organization has shown a higher spirit of service, and their devotion has risen above the routine nature of their duties and become a thing divine.

Few of us appreciate that these nurses have served at a very real financial sacrifice, and have lived under much more unpleasant conditions than those afforded by their profession in civilian life.

The lads dangerously ill and severely wounded who have been nursed back to health from the "valley of the shadow" will not have to throw bouquets or sing the praises of the Army nurse. The gratitude they feel and the respect and esteem in which she is held by them is sufficient compensation to her. This is written, however, in the hope that it will bring a little cheer to those noble women who are toiling such long hours these days; and to show that we appreciate their having brought a little bit of America to us and proved "the greatest mother in the world" when our lives hung in the balance in far away France.

GRATEFUL PATIENT.

HEADLINES OF A YEAR AGO

From THE STARS AND STRIPES of March 22, 1918

48 MEDALS AWARDED IN LUNEVILLE SECTOR—Every Rank from Colonel to Private and Most of United States Represented in New Group of Honor Men—Major "Best Officer Under Fire Ever Seen"—Two Sergeants Commended by Every French Officer in Sector—Trio of Corporals "Showed Coolness of War-Hardened Veterans."

SECRETARY OF WAR VISITS FRONT LINE—Inspection Tour of A.E.F. Takes Him Into Listening Post—Greeted by German Guns—Shells Tear Crater Within 50 Yards of Automobile in Which Mr. Baker Is Riding—Complete Survey of Field—First, New England and Rainbow Divisions Complimented for Their Work.

MEN IN RANKS TO HAVE OPPORTUNITY FOR BARS—Army Candidates' School Will Continue to Train Promising A.E.F. Soldiers for Second Lieutenant's Commissions.

SERVICE CHEVRONS BEGIN TO BLOSSOM—Regulations for Wearing Zone of Advance Decoration Announced.

DRYS' VICTORY IN NEW YORK IS POSTPONED—Delay Gained by Wet Advocates Puts Question Before Voters.

MORE MUSIC

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:—

Regardless of the fact that the armistice has been signed and troops are beginning to return to America, music for music lovers is still being shipped overseas. My work in this connection will continue until all troops have left France and Germany. If bandmasters will drop me a line before they sail for home, I shall appreciate the courtesy.

In addition to music for bands, I am now shipping for orchestras and jazz outfits the jazziest music, ever for dances—all of the very latest order—and what is now being rendered on Broadway. Just a card to my address will start a good collection on its long journey.

An assortment of vocal orchestrations and professional copies of the "newest in popular music" for show purposes is now going forward to divisional amusement units and minstrel troupes.

MISS RAY C. SAWYER.
79 Hamilton Place, New York City.

THE HOME FIRES

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:—

The words of the song, "Keep the Home Fires Burning," were written by Lena Guilbert Brown, a graduate of Elmira College, Elmira, N. Y. She was living in London with her mother and her crippled son when the war broke out and was very active in war relief work. In March, 1918, she and her son were killed by a bomb dropped by a German air raider. We are now raising a fund to erect a memorial building in her honor.

So many of the boys have sung her song and enjoyed it that I am sure this news will be of interest to them. I would be grateful if you would make the announcement in your columns. Lena Guilbert Brown Ford was a native of Elmira, N. Y., and graduated here in 1887.

FREDERICK LENTS,
President, Elmira College.

76TH INSIGNIA

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:—

I am a sergeant of the 301st Ammunition Train, which is a part of the 76th Division, and I am stationed at Nantes, A.P.O. 767. There are a number of the boys with me and I am writing in their behalf to find out the divisional insignia of the 76th. I would appreciate it if you would answer my letter.

MEMBER OF 76TH DIVISION.

[The 76th Division, a replacement organization, was sent to the United States shortly after the signing of the armistice, and never had an insignia approved by G.H.Q. Some of its members, however, many of whom are still in France, are wearing the following shoulder marking: Black five-pointed star, with ship in center, having red hull and white sails, with figures "76" in yellow thread on sails.—EDITOR.]

HERE'S A MAIL RECORD

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:—

Kindly publish the following in behalf of my buddy, who, being a member of the A.E.F., wishes to know if any one over here can come anywhere near equaling his record of receiving mail.

To begin with, it all happened back in God's country, where he inserted the following advertisement in a few of the widely circulated New York and Chicago newspapers:

Lonesome soldier boy wishes to correspond with some person who has no relatives in the Army. Address, etc.

Two weeks later he received 13 bags of first-class mail, 315 registered and specials, and two truckloads of second-class. It took 37 men, including him and myself, nine days (24 hours a day) to read over and sort it.

In the registered and specials he received the small sum of $1,187.23, and in the second-class such articles as sweaters, helmets, gloves, etc.; in fact, enough to equip two companies of Infantry.

The next week he received, via the Southern Railway, 44 cars in one block (net capacity of cars, 20 tons), and it took half the entire camp of 30,000 men 20 days to read and sort it; three cars were registered letters, five special, 12 first-class, and the balance second-class.

I will not try to tell you the amount of money he received, because he and I got tired counting it, but can assure you he has enough left to make life what it is when he gets home.

Now, he does not wish to gain notoriety, but, for the benefit of those in doubt, kindly publish his name:

Pvt. William T. Sheridan, Hq., 104th Ammunition Train, 29th Division.

Thanking you for your past amusing editorials, I remain,

W. L. MCDONOUGH,
Cpl., 104th Ammunition Train, 29th Division.

DOWN AT ANGERS

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:—

It is our belief that THE STARS AND STRIPES is the official American E.F. newspaper. If so, we conveyed in your statements regarding the Angers Casual Officers Camp in your issue of January 31, 1919. Due to various influences and previous knowledge of casual camps, we did not anticipate an agreeable environment for the period before embarkation.

However, it is our belief that this is as efficient, systematic and well-organized a military post as exists in the American E.F. Every possible detail has been taken into consideration. The treatment received by casual officers is absolutely just and exceptionally liberal. In view of the fact that these officers are returning to their homes and are in all possible haste to arrive there, one might expect impatience and grumbling.

This has not been the case. During our stay at this camp we have overheard hundreds of comments expressing feelings of content and very few comments expressing discontent.

It is believed that an injustice has been done to the officers on the staff of this post, as well as to the general reputation of the camp.

HAROLD A. CLARK,
Capt., Air Service.
F. L. DREW,
1st Lieut., Air Service.

HE WANTS A DIPLOMA

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:—

Do you ever allow letters that are excited by jealousy to smirch your columns? If you do, please pass this on to the linotyper. I am anxious to see what it looks like in print.

I notice they are starting to pass our warrants to all non-coms who were promoted in France. How about the poor second loot?

Many, many months ago, a big gang of us fellows were lined up on a famous parade ground in Langres and told to go downtown and buy a Sam Browne. Well, I got the belt, all right, and when I returned they gave me a little book with some 1,600 names inside as a receipt. I never have been quite of my name's being in that book.

The guy that bunked next to me said that some day we would all receive a great big certificate with a lot of pretty flowers and fancy printing on it, but it hasn't come yet.

Truthfully, I don't care about myself, but I have a sneaky idea that the folks back home would like to frame that certificate and hang it on the wall between the insurance and brewery calendars we get every year.

BRASS POLISH.